

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service

Kaibab National Forest

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Kaibab National Forest Managing One Wildfire and Three Wildland Fire Use Fires

WILLIAMS, Ariz. – A wildfire and three wildland fire use fires are burning on the Kaibab National Forest. The wildfire is located on the North Kaibab Ranger District. One wildland fire use fire is also burning on the North Kaibab district while the other two are burning on the Tusayan Ranger District. The North Kaibab Ranger District is north of Grand Canyon National Park while the Tusayan Ranger District is south of the park.

Wildfire

NOTE: THIS WILL BE THE LAST UPDATE ON THE INDIAN FIRE UNLESS CONDITIONS CHANGE.

Fire Name: Indian Fire

Time/Date Started: Discovered afternoon of June 9

Location: North Kaibab Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest; The Indian Fire is in the southwest corner of the North Kaibab Ranger District adjacent to Grand Canyon National Park. The fire is north of Monument and Crazy Jug points. It is about 19 miles southwest of Jacob Lake.

Cause: Lightning

Fuels: Timber, grass and brush

Size: 468 acres

% Contained: 100 %

Resources Committed: 2 engines, miscellaneous firefighting personnel. Total personnel = about 12

Structures: No structures are threatened.

Closures: No road/trail closures are in effect.

Summary: All containment lines have held despite windy conditions. Firefighters will continue to patrol the area and extinguish any remaining hotspots.

Wildland Fire Use Fires

A wildland fire use fire is a fire that is managed for resource benefits. Before a fire is put into wildland fire use status, land managers evaluate several criteria. For example, if a fire threatens life, property or resources, it is not considered appropriate for wildland fire use and is immediately suppressed. Once a fire is put into wildland fire use status, it is actively managed, meaning that fire managers establish boundaries and define weather and fuels conditions under which the fire will be allowed to burn. All wildland fire use fires must be naturally-ignited (lightning).

NOTE: THE HAHNENBERG FIRE USE TEAM HAS TAKEN OVER MANAGEMENT OF THE WARM WILDLAND FIRE USE FIRE. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE FIRE, PLEASE CALL 928-643-8100.

WFU Name: Warm Wildland Fire Use

Time/Date Started: June 8; was discovered by fire personnel

Location: North Kaibab Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest; The Warm Wildland Fire Use Fire is located about 3 miles south of Jacob Lake adjacent to state Highway 67. It is on the west side of Highway 67.

Cause: Lightning (All WFUs must be naturally-ignited.)

Fuels: Ponderosa pine litter

Acreage Treated: 251 acres; continued growth expected

Resources Committed: 1 Type 1 (hotshot) crew, 2 Type 2 hand crews, 2 fire use modules, 4 engines, miscellaneous firefighting personnel. Total personnel = about 121

Resource Benefits: Reduction of heavy accumulations of fuel on the forest floor; restoration of fire to the ecosystem; recycling of nutrients into the soil; protection of the Jacob Lake area from future high-intensity wildland fires

Closures: No road/trail closures are in effect.

WFU Name: West Wildland Fire Use Fire

Time/Date Started: Ignited June 8; discovered afternoon of June 9

Location: Tusayan Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest; The West Wildland Fire Use Fire started just north of Forest Road 302 about 1 mile west of Skinner Tank. It is about 8 miles southeast of Tusayan.

Cause: Lightning (All WFUs must be naturally-ignited.)

Fuels: Ponderosa pine forest with scattered oak and brush

Acreage Treated: 1,300 acres

Costs To Date: \$17,500

Resources Committed: 3 engines, 1 dozer, miscellaneous firefighting personnel. Total personnel = about 15

Resource Benefits: Reduction of heavy accumulations of fuel on the forest floor; restoration of fire to the ecosystem; recycling of nutrients into the soil; improvement of wildlife habitat

Closures: No road/trail closures are in effect. While Forest Road 302 remains open, motorists are asked to use caution in the area due to firefighting traffic. Some smoke impacts could be visible along FR 302. East Rim Drive in Grand Canyon National Park will likely continue to receive some smoke. Motorists should be aware that they will need to use extra caution.

Summary: The West Wildland Fire Use Fire exhibited low-to-moderate fire behavior yesterday. The fire use fire's western and northern edges are secure, which means that fire managers don't expect it to continue growing in those directions. The fire use fire is still growing toward the east and south. On Monday, it crossed the old 302 road, which is a closed road. Yesterday, it moved toward and reached the new 302 road. The new 302 road remains open, but fire managers urge caution due to smoke impacts and use by firefighting traffic. Today, firefighters will continue monitoring the West Wildland Fire Use Fire. They expect to see some additional growth to the east and south. Smoke production from the fire use fire has started to diminish somewhat as the fire has moved into areas previously treated with fire. However, smoke has been noticeable in the areas of Grandview Lookout and Desert View.

WFU Name: Bar Wildland Fire Use

Time/Date Started: Ignited June 9; discovered June 10

Location: Tusayan Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest; The Bar Wildland Fire Use Fire is

located about 3 miles west of the junction of state Highway 64 and Forest Road 307 in the Upper Basin area. It is about 16 miles southeast of Tusayan.

Cause: Lightning (All WFUs must be naturally-ignited.)

Fuels: Pinyon/juniper woodland, sagebrush and grass

Acreage Treated: 90 acres (minimal to no growth was observed yesterday)

Resources Committed: 2 engines, miscellaneous firefighting personnel. Total personnel = about 15

Resource Benefits: Reduction of heavy accumulations of fuel on the forest floor; restoration of fire to the ecosystem; recycling of nutrients into the soil; improvement of wildlife habitat

Closures: No road/trail closures are in effect.

Summary: The Bar Wildland Fire Use Fire still appears to be active but did not grow much, if at all, yesterday. The fire use fire's northern boundary is secure, which means that fire managers don't expect it to continue growing in that direction. The northern boundary is Forest Road 2815. The fire use fire is just south of 77 Bar Tank. The location of the fire and prevailing winds are pushing smoke away from Grand Canyon Village, Tusayan and the Grand Canyon Airport. However, there has been a moderate amount of smoke over the Grand Canyon north and east of Desert View in the afternoons. Today, fire managers will continue monitoring the Bar Wildland Fire Use Fire. They have been pleased with its effects. In the area where the fire use fire is burning, there are a lot of bug-killed pinyon trees, and there is a substantial amount of dead material on the forest floor. Fire will help to reduce the dead and down fuels while making way for the growth of grasses and forbs. Fire managers hope the treatment with fire will help to improve wildlife habitat in the area. The Bar Wildland Fire Use Fire is also creating a mosaic across the landscape, with some areas burned at a low level of intensity and others burned at a higher intensity. There are also areas within the fire perimeter that haven't burned at all.

For more information, please call Jackie Denk at 928-635-5607.

What is Wildland Fire Use?

- Management of ignitions (fire starts) by natural events, such as lightning
- All wildland fire use fires must be started by a natural ignition source (i.e. lightning). If a fire is person-caused, it is not eligible to be put into wildland fire use status and suppression action must be taken.
- Wildland fire use fires must meet resource objectives and have an approved implementation plan.

What are some of the resource objectives of Wildland Fire Use?

- Recycling nutrients into the soil
- Enhancing habitat for wildlife
- Reducing accumulations of woody material on the forest floor
- Increasing the amount of perennial grasses, forbs and browse plants for the benefit of wildlife and livestock
- Maintaining grassland ecosystems by controlling the encroachment of trees
- Reducing the potential for high-intensity fires
- Protecting threatened and endangered animal and plant habitat from the negative effects of high-intensity fires
- Creating conditions such as more open stands and reduced fuels
- Allowing fires to actively function as an ecological process across the landscape

Doesn't wildland fire use really mean you just allow fires to burn?

NO! Wildland fire use fires are actively managed and must have been thoroughly evaluated before being put into wildland fire use status. Fire managers must go through a rigorous decision-making process that includes:

- Determining how the fire started. Wildland fire use incidents must have been started from a natural ignition source, such as lightning. If a fire is human-caused, it must be suppressed.
- Determining if there is a threat to life, property or resources that cannot be mitigated. If such a threat exists, the fire must be suppressed.
- Determining if there are sufficient firefighting resources available to actively manage a wildland fire use incident. If there are not, the fire must be suppressed.
- Finally, weighing the potential risks and benefits of a specific wildland fire use incident. If the risks outweigh the benefits, the fire will be suppressed.